



WESTERN NEWS

Libby MT 59923

Wednesday & Friday

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Superior Clipping Service

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**ASK EPA !!****Questions and Answers****about Asbestos and EPA's Investigation**

Q: Are the wages of those working on the EPA cleanup really being changed?

A: Yes. The wage rate for most cleanup workers has changed as the scope of work in Libby has changed primarily from heavy construction at the former processing plants to residential cleanup in town.

In considering wage rate changes, EPA is seeking to balance the need to conduct the cleanup efficiently and quickly with the need for strong wages that attract and retain skilled workers. To ensure fairness and consistency with similar jobs and not discourage competition, EPA has asked the Department of Labor (DOL) to make a determination about the rates. EPA expects DOL to provide base wage rates below which a particular labor classification must not go. EPA will release information on the DOL determination soon.

Lowering the wage rate will not reduce the amount of money EPA spends on cleanup or the amount of money spent in Libby. With reduced wages, more workers can be hired and more cleanup done with the available money. Funding is exceptionally tight and EPA is trying to stretch cleanup dollars as far as possible. Ultimately, while this change may be unfavorable for some workers, it means that more people's health will be protected sooner - EPA's primary goal.

If you want additional information, please pick up a copy of the summary of the changes and the rationale from EPA's Information Center at 501 Mineral Ave. It is open from 8:30 - 5:00 Monday through Friday.

For more information call toll free:

Wendy Thomi at 1-866-457-2690 or
EPA Information Center at 293-6194